opinion be confirmed by the Commissioners of Works and Buildings—to seal the award, at once puts the case as it were into Chancery, and the effect of this may be injurious, not only to the case which has given rise to the question, but may become a direct impediment to all other parties between whom questions of the like nature may arise, and thus a rule or proviso of the Act—whether restrictive for the public, or protective for an individual—may become virtually inoperative.*

Συνεργος.

BRICKS v. STUCCO.

A CONGREVE has been fired by your correspondent, Mr. Brandon, in a late number of THE BUILDER, against the use of *stucco*. The good gentleman seems to forget there *may be* something said on both sides. As an amateur of every thing in art and architecture, I differ with him *toto cœlo*. And, on the contrary, feel that the public owe a deep debt of gratitude to those architects who have and do still continue to embellish our smoky capital, and other cities and towns in the empire, with examples of architecture, that would not otherwise be disclosed to the public eye, unless to such of them as could afford to visit the continent of Europe for that intent.

There are some of us whose fondness for art is such, that we think if realities are not attainable, their accurate copies or imitations are better to possess, than not have them to look at at all. I wish, within my heart, the Government of this country had half the zeal for promotion of the nation's honour in patronising the fine arts, that they shew in a willing obedience to throw away the public money in perpetrating would-be architecture in certain royal residences. France shames us as a nation in these particulars, and always will whilst, as a people, art and architecture continue at such discount as it does with the English. What other nation but ourselves would have found a minister venturing to build a gallery for the arts with second-hand pillars and entablature taken from a little low structure, and then throw the imputation of bad taste on the architect? whilst hundreds of thousands were *filched* from the Treasury to build, with no taste at all, a royal bauble.

These are subjects for a congreve, my good Mr. B., if you will, and the Government ought to have plenty of them. But where expense excludes the possibility of using stone, I trust the architects will always be "*few*," and there may be "*several*," as Mr. B. says, too, and yet not many, as compared with the whole body, who will consent to forego the use of cement: but notwithstanding all he says, adopt the motto—"*contra audentior ito*." I recollect, in wandering through the streets of Pompeii, I entered a Patrician building, in the court of which stood the remains of an arcade; the pillars constructed of brick: these generally were covered with a *red stucco*, evidently intended as the substitute for what is now called "*rosso antico*."

The Pompeians lived in a classic age. The building belonged to a rich man, yet there was stucco! I might go on with other examples, if I had my journal here to refer to, I make no doubt. But the above circumstances I well recollect: I observed to my friends at the time,—that it seemed *rosso antico* was very valuable even in those days.

I am, Sir, &c. W. MASON.

Necton.

CITY OF LONDON UNION WORKHOUSE.—Sir: Will you ask the worthy guardians what has become of their self-concocted plan, "Vivo Spem?"—and whether it has not occupied more time in altering than the whole 41 rejected architects were allowed to execute theirs. It has been sent back from Somerset-house, as it would not bear the test: and by special permission is to be presented a second time. If I conjecture rightly, the plan will undergo such an operation as will very materially alter the estimate, if not the general appearance. This was foreseen and commented on by you in November last.

ONE OF THE REJECTED.

* Of this we shall have occasion to speak before long, and may feel it our duty to shew that within side of the Metropolitan Buildings Office it has produced a state of things very far from satisfactory.

FACILITIES FOR CHEAPENING AND PURIFYING GAS.

WE were the first to draw attention (now some time ago), to Mr. Leslie's new burner and other improvements tending to increase the purity and lessen the cost of gas, and have had no reason to retract the good opinion of them which we had expressed when the experience of them was less than it is now. At a meeting of the City Commission of Sewers, on Friday in last week, to inquire into the subject, Mr. Leslie made some statements which excited no little astonishment.

The first public experiment made by him as to the illumination, had been effected under the authority of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, in the Queen's-walk, in the Green-park, where he had fixed his burners to eighteen of the lamps, which were 90 feet apart, and consumed 4½ feet per lamp per hour. The contrast between those lamps and the others lighted upon the usual plan, was most palpable. The next experiment was made by him at the Post-office, perhaps the largest affair of the kind in the world.

The saving effected at the Post-office in the first week of the present year was 23,600 feet; in the second week it would be 54,000 feet. He had undertaken to save them 1,000*l.* a year in the lighting. His mode was now being applied at the Ordnance and other Government offices. When asked by Mr. Lawrence at what cost the Commissioners of Sewers ought to be able to make and supply gas themselves, Mr. Leslie said at 3*s.* per 1,000 feet, which would include cost of plant, mains, &c. He dwelt much on the benefits of purification, and asserted, as we have before done, that ere long the public will demand a purer gas than that with which they are now supplied.

It appears that 2,700 street lamps are lighted in the City by the commissioners, and cost between 11,000*l.* and 12,000*l.* per annum. The lighting of the prisons and other buildings is extra.

THE WORCESTER LUNATIC ASYLUM COMPETITION.

SOME months since the magistrates of Worcester advertised for designs for an asylum, and, in due course, twenty-seven architects sent in designs, of whom three sent two each, making a total of thirty designs.

The advertisement announced that prizes of 50*l.*, 30*l.*, and 20*l.* would be given to those gentlemen whose designs the committee considered entitled to stand, in point of merit, first, second, and third. After consideration, the magistrates awarded the first prize to Messrs. Hamilton and Medland, Gloucester; the second to Mr. F. J. Francis, of London; and the third to Mr. S. S. Markham, of London. After some delay, the Committee of Visitors have determined on adopting the first design. If the Commissioners on Lunacy approve of it, it will be erected, with such improvements as may be suggested, and the authors of it will be employed to carry it out. The site is said to be one of the most beautiful spots in the county.

PREVENTION OF FIRES IN WAREHOUSES.

SIR,—We have had a great number of fires in Liverpool warehouses, and found great difficulty in getting at the place where the fire was (many of our warehouse rooms being above 30 yards long, and full of goods). Lately, in the case of Mr. R. Gladstone's warehouse, for example, the great body of smoke kept the firemen out for a long time, and though from the first there was plenty of water, it had no effect, as the iron doors could not be got at to open them.

Having witnessed the great difficulty to get at the fire in the above case, I have sketched a plan, by means of which, if we have a good supply of water, any fire can be flooded without the firemen being exposed to either smoke or fire, and beg leave to send you the heads of it:—The stairs are to be open to the street all up, the steps to be of stone or iron. I propose to have an iron water pipe from bottom to top of the warehouse in one corner of the stairs, so that access could be had at all times. This pipe must be supplied by a strong force of water from below, or from a cistern at the top of any building where used.

To each warehouse floor an iron pipe with round holes at each 3 feet, is to be carried round each room, and attached to the service-pipe, and to each floor a tap is fixed to let the water play when wanted. The service-pipe to have a tap at the bottom, if served from a street main water-pipe, or at top if served from a cistern; the pipes to be kept empty until wanted.

On each landing on stairs there must be a place to screw a brass pipe to, to play in the room, if the iron pipe is not thought needful. The doors into each room to be of iron, and hung so that when the door bar is drawn the doors will open by their own weight.

The iron rod that fastens the warehouse doors should be brought through the wall and fastened on the stairs, so that it can be got at any time.

Liverpool. JAMES THOMSON.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

A MEETING of the Metropolitan Commissioners of Sewers was held on Thursday, the 27th ult., in Committee Room, No. 23, New Houses of Parliament. Lord Ebrington, M.P., in the chair.

The Clerk read a report from Sir H. De la Beche and Mr. Chadwick, on the subject of the proposed Ordnance Survey of London, giving reasons for its commencement in Westminster, and recommending that "a block plan should be completed for the district bounded by Bridge-street, Great George-street, Bird-cage-walk, Constitution-hill, Hyde-park-corner, Knightsbridge, Brompton-road, Fulham-road, Park-place, Milman's-row, and the river line from Milman's row to Westminster-bridge." The report continued,—

"We have further to report that the survey has been commenced at the points we recommended, and that under the authority of the orders of the court, a portion of the Sewers Office in Greek-street, has been set off for the accommodation of the officers of the survey: that the upper part of the premises of the Sewers Office, Hatton-garden, and a part of the house and office of the Sewers Commission for the Tower Hamlets, have been occupied for the lodging and accommodation of non-commissioned officers and men of the Sappers and Miners engaged in the work of the survey."

Appended to these reports were a series of questions put to Mr. Wilson, one of the parochial officers of St. Margaret's, before the Sanitary Commissioners at Gwydyr House, with his answers thereto, setting forth that in various parts of Westminster, particularly in the neighbourhood of Buckingham Palace (viz. Palace-street, William-street, &c.), the refuse of cesspools in the houses is pumped into the streets, where it is frequently suffered to remain until a shower of rain falls to wash it away, and that many of the basement stories are uninhabitable from the offensive exhalations arising from the cesspools: and although sewer rates have been paid for centuries, yet little benefit has been derived therefrom. The reports were received and unanimously adopted.

A letter was received from Mr. Abraham, the architect to the Westminster Improvement Commissioners, as to the drainage of houses falling within the range of the projected improvements from Vauxhall-bridge to the Broad Sanctuary. The clerk suggested, that as a question might arise between the Commissioners of Woods and Forests and the Improvement Commissioners, it would be perhaps prudent in the first instance to refer the subject to the General Purposes Committee, which suggestion was agreed to.

A document was received from Mr. Bardwell, of Great Queen-street, Westminster, on a subject mooted at a former court, having for its object the collection of the sewage of the whole of the metropolis into reservoirs, to be placed at three selected points, so that the entire of the refuse matter at present discharged into the River Thames might be withdrawn, and converted into a valuable manure for agricultural purposes. He proposed in his plan the formation of three reservoirs for that purpose: the first, to be on the banks of the Kensington canal, a length of 3¾ miles; the second, on the banks on the River Lea, 5½ miles in length; and the third, 4½ miles, near the Surrey Docks, and the estimated cost as follows.

The first reservoir, 3¾ miles		£93,400
The second do. 5½ miles		186,250
The third do. 4½ miles		39,840
		318,560
Three depots, with plant, &c. each	£75,050	105,000
Total cost		£423,560

By this scheme, it is calculated that the three reservoirs will intercept 200,000 tons of solid matter, which, when manufactured by Robinson's

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